RELIGIOUS READING.

ENTER IN.

Yea, come, dear Lord! My heart
I fain would open wide
For Thee to enter, nor depart;
But with me to abide.

Abide with me; and teach
My feeble heart to know
How to Thy stature I may reach,
To perfect manhood grow.

I hear Thee knock without,
Seeking to enter in;
And yet I suffer fear and doubt
To keep me in my sin;

The sins of unbelief,
Distrust and cowardice;
Which cause my gracious Saviour grief;
Nor will they let me rise.

O could I rise above
These earth-born mists; and see
The heaven of Thine unclouded love,
And dwell therein with Thee!

My heart I long to find
Freed from its selfish care,
Filled with pure love to all mankind,
With faith and hope, with prayer.

Therefore to Thee I fly;
Dwell Thou within my breast;
Weary and heavy laden, I
In Thee alone find rest.

—*Thomas Hill, D. D., in N. Y. Independent.*

IS IT INSPIRED?

A Doctrine Which Has Triumphantly Sustained the Ordeal of Both Friendly and Unfriendly Criticism.

Christian doctrine, like every other form of asserted truth, must have its ordeal of inquiry and criticism. Our Lord Himself implies a recognition of this fact where He says to His Judaic hearers on one occasion: "Search the Scriptures (revised version: "Ye search the Scriptures"), for in them ye think ye have eternal life; and these are they which bear witness of me." He thus submitted His own personal Messiahship to that tribunal of Scripture to which His hearers were wont, whether honestly or not, to make their own appeal. Paul, somewhat in the same spirit, writes to the Thessalonians: "Prove all things." Not at all that in this he approves either a captious, a rationalistic or a skeptical spirit; but he would have his Christian brethren know where they stand, and stand firmly; in other words, as he says in the clause following: "Hold fast that which is good." A spirit of modest, honest, loyal inquiry, criticism even, is in perfect consistence with the reverence which every human spirit should cherish toward whatever is Divine. It is only when human reason grows arrogant, or knowledge conceited, or when the proud and wicked heart defies the judgment that condemns—only in such case that even criticism is inconsistent with Christian principle.

The doctrine of inspiration is one of those which offer themselves in a special way to the reverent investigation of the Christian student. Here before us lies a book. It is called by a great name—the Word of the living God; it has a great history, covering since it began to be written a period of some four thousand years; it offers to do what no other book has ever done, teach religion as an absolute truth; it has created civilizations, has revolutionized society, has purified and ennobled the family, has ruled, and sanctified, and glorified myriads of human lives and pillowed, in peace and triumph, millions on millions of dying heads. It is a very old book, and yet somehow it is new to each generation, and to each believing soul. The claim is—a claim evidently consistent with all these facts—that it was produced as no other book ever was; under a Divine inspiration and guidance, such as that while other books are to be scrutinized in their teaching, and tested in right ways as to their truth, this one, when once we understand it, is to be accepted, in all it declares, in a faith absolutely unquestioning. No one ought to be surprised if the question is sometimes urged, in all sincerity, what and how much all this imports, and where is the evidence for it all?

For our own part we say at once that we accept the Bible, in every part of it, and without essential qualification, as an inspired book. And we are impressed more, the more we consider the matter, what Divine wisdom is shown in the form and process of the inspiration, so far as this can be understood. It does not seem to be a mechanical inspiration; not such as any of us might look for in anticipating so great an event as God giving the world a book. We should expect, perhaps, a book so unlike all others as to be in no way susceptible of comparison with them. We very likely would expect the human instrumentality, were such to be employed, to be as purely an instrument merely as is the pen in the hand of a writer. Knowing as we do how imperfect is all human workmanship, we should assume, probably, that nothing of it would be allowed to appear in what God Himself produced. And still, in any such anticipation we should suppose God to work in a way different from all others of which we have any knowledge. There is no sphere of the Divine operation in which things are brought to pass in any such mechanical way. God works through laws and agencies, and every law, every agent has full recognition in its own sphere, working as is its nature to work, and having its own individual part in the product. Nowhere, besides, do we see more perfect liberty of operation than in all those processes going on around us in which natural law and natural agency are producing their results. What a beautiful freedom of activity do we see in nature, at the same time that all goes forward under a regulation of law that is at once omnipresent and omnipotent. Did God give us His word somewhat in the same way? And is the fact of His having done so one proof that it *is* His word?

For example, this *human* element in the Scriptures. It is the presence of this which really creates all the serious difficulties any one can imagine himself to find in the doctrine of inspiration. Passages are met with, here and there, which suggests to some minds a doubt whether *such* a passage can really be inspired, or properly be regarded as part of an inspired book. Well, why not? Let it be those passages in the Psalms, called "imprecatory," sometimes objected to. Let it be the language used in describing those "Wars of the Lord," in which the rude valor of the Israelitish soldiery degenerated into what we should now call ferocity and cruelty. Let it be the personal idiosyncracies of writers, so that Paul is in one sense as much Paul in writing under inspiration as if there were no inspiration, and John or Peter in a like way self-revealed in both thought and style. Why, the meaning of it all is that God can inspire man to write the things it pleases Him that they should write without making them machines, and give the revelation of Himself in His book the same variety, the same freedom, the same boundlessness of resource in method and instrument, as He gives to the revelation of Himself in nature.

Then, after all, when you have taken note of all these peculiarities of the human element in the Bible, you will find, if you take the trouble to examine the matter fully, that the Bible is none the less on account of them a book such as only divine inspiration should have produced. It is to us, often, a matter of astonishment that any student of those old literatures which date back to the same periods as the writings in the Old Testament, especially, should any one of them fail to be a thorough believer in the inspiration of the Bible. At every point of view the contrast is simply wonderful. Those old books, Egyptian, Chaldæan, Assyrian, Hindu, even Greek and Roman are such as men make. Here and there a scrap of that wisdom which pervades every part of the Christian Scriptures. Here and there some glimmer of a correct idea of God, of the soul, of retribution, of reward, of what life means and what death means. For the rest, a mythical dream, a meaningless rhapsody, an oppressive, soul-crushing ritual or an idolatry which shocks an enlightened mind with a sense of something too bad to be possible. To turn from one of them to the Bible is a step out of darkness into light, out of mire and pollution to the firm, green bank, where the flowers glisten and the shadows play. How could a man praise "The Light of Asia," and see nothing Divine in the "Sun of Righteousness?"

The doctrine of inspiration has thus far sustained the ordeal of both friendly and unfriendly criticism, without loss or damage in any particular. It will continue so to do. In the meantime, let the significance of such criticism not be mistaken. The doubt of some hesitating or sceptical critic, the mistake of some interpreter, does not impeach the record. These are "the grass" which withereth, "the flower" which "fadeth." The word of the Lord "is that which endures forever." — *Chicago Standard.*

What Rationalism Lacks.

The fault of rationalism appears to me to consist not so much in what it has as in what it has not. The understanding has its work to do with respect to the Bible, because the Bible consists of human history. Critical and historical inquiries respecting it are, therefore, perfectly legitimate; it contains matter which is within the province of the understanding, and the understanding has God's warrant for doing that work which He appointed it to do; only let us remember that the understanding can not ascend to Divine things; that for these another faculty is necessary to reason or faith. If this faculty be living in us, then there can be no rationalism; and what is called so is no other than the voice of Christian truth. Where a man's writings show that he is keenly alive to the Divine part of Scripture, that he sees God ever in it, and regards it truly as His Word, his judgments of the human parts in it are not likely to be rationalistic; and if his understanding decides according to its own laws upon points within its own province, while his faith duly tempers it, and restrains it from entering upon another's dominion, the result will, in all probability, be such as commonly attends the use of God's manifold gifts in their just proportions—it will image, after our imperfect measure, the holiness of God and the truth of God.—*Thomas Arnold, D. D.*

WISE SAYINGS.

—The soul that is fighting against the power and dominion of sin over itself, is on the winning side—the side that never lost a battle.—*Interior*

—Feelings come and go like fight troops following the victory of the present; but, principles, like troops of the line, are undisturbed and stand fast.—*N. Y. Observer.*

—In a recent sermon Mr. Spurgeon expressed the belief that in a hundred years people will be amazed that there were ever found those who could believe in the now current philosophy, particularly in its anti-evangelical aspect.

—Let us take each hour's work in its appointed time, realizing that the sun is shining on us. We do not half live in the sunshine as we might. It is those who live with God in Christ, and walk with God in the Spirit, that do effective work for God.—*Baptist Weekly.*

—A distinguished Sunday-school worker has said lately that the Sabbath-school of the future is to be a part of the church just as much as the hand is a part of the body. Certainly it ought to be, for, as a matter of fact, the Sunday-school is merely one branch of church work—one of the most important, too.—*Congregationalist.*

—We must have individuality of hearing as well as individuality of preaching. The true hearer is the man who supposes himself to be the only listener in all the sanctuary—who is so absorbed in spiritual earnestness and attention that he hears every word as if spoken to himself alone—a message just delivered from the Great Father to the one wandering child.—*Religious Herald.*

—It is not with truth as with flowers, which we use to smell at for an hour or two, and then throw them away. But for necessary truths—they will not die in your hands. They are not like flowers. They are like gems, precious stones, that keep a luster from year to year; they are always shining and bright; you may wear them while you live, and not be weary of them.—*Arrowsmith.*

WINTER FASHIONS.

Rich and Elaborate Velvet Costumes With Turquoise Embroidery.

Velvet is the material for rich winter costumes used for visits, afternoon receptions and theater parties. Beaded passementerie, watered ribbon sashes and fur are the trimmings for velvet suits. The preference is given this winter to very dark winter shades, both in garnet and copper tints to Havana brown and green for the velvet, while the caprice for the moment is to trim these colors with black, adding very wide sashes of black watered ribbon on the skirt, trimming the basque with passementerie ornaments made of large cut jet beads, and using similar ornaments with black fur in the mantle. For theater toilets there are many dresses of plain velvet trimmed with gold or silver galloon, according to the color of the velvet, or with galloons embroidered to copy placques of colored stones on a gold ground. Thus there are gold galloons with turquoise embroidery, or emerald, or ruby, or sapphire, or a blending of them. These velvet dresses are opened at the front and slashed at one side, to give a view of a contrasting underskirt of satin beneath. If a lighter shade is desired, the dress is trimmed with one of the flower galloons. These are composed of petals of all sorts of small, fine flowers, daises, myosotis, violets, jasmine, chrysanthemums, etc.

Fancy the petals of any one of these pressed in a mass and mounted on a band of tulle; this is a flower galloon. They are made in various widths for various positions, and are also used for partially filling in the front of the corsage. In selecting velvet, that with a very short, thick pile is preferred, because it is more durable than that with the long, heavy, nap. It is economy to buy good velvet, putting all the outlay of money into the material, without adding expensive trimming, as new silk velvet is beautiful enough of itself, and any trimming set upon it mars the pile, flattening is in some cases so badly that it is difficult to restore it by steaming. It is the best plan to have the entire dress of plain velvet, instead of combining it with figured velvet as plain velvet is always in fashion. In making the dress, the pile must be turned upward, so that it will look rich when the fleece falls downward and opens naturally, instead of being flattened, as it would if made to point downward, as was formerly the custom. Wide plaits on one side and low draperies on the other are used for velvet skirts to give them an appearance of great fullness. There must first be a silk foundation skirt bordered all around with a three-inch knife plaiting of the velvet, and above this some plain velvet is set on the sides and front, beginning quite narrow at the foot on the left, widening as it crosses the front, and extending half way up the skirt on the right side. Two or three lengthwise side plaits then extend down the left side from belt to foot, being made of a single breadth of velvet. For the front drapery three breadths are taken, being sewed straight next the side plaits, and having a cluster of four plaits at the top sewed to the belt in the space of two inches on the left side. These plaits widen to the foot, where they spread out like a fan, and are simply hemmed. The remainder of these three breadths, after crossing the front, is then caught up in plaits on the right side above the velvet, which is sewed to the silk skirt, and these plaits disappear in a side seam next the back. This gives a long apron effect, and, in order to make it fit smoothly at the top, two or three small darts may be taken if needed. The back is covered by three straight breadths of velvet gathered or plaited to the belt and hemmed at the foot, being long enough to cover even the foot plaiting.—*Boston Herald.*

SIGNS OF THE ZODIAC.

A Valuable Publication—A Combination of Humor and Useful Information.

The most interesting and original introduction to a book that we have ever seen, comes to us in a little work just received, in the shape of a humorous article entitled "The Twelve Signs of the Zodiac," illustrated by Thomas Worth, the well-known New York artist. The old and familiar signs with which we are well acquainted through almanacs and otherwise, are given a new and every-day meaning, and we defy any one to look at them or to read the text without indulging in a hearty laugh. "Bill Nye's" thrilling experience with a cyclone is also wittily treated by that humorist, and "Wade Whipple," "M Quad" and others of those writers of to-day, who "shoot folly as it flies," are amongst the contributors, while artists such as Opper, Cox and Coffin have furnished apt illustrations. The book, which is the *St. Jacob's Oil Family Calendar and Book of Health and Humor for the Million for 1886*, is published by The Charles A. Vogeler Company, of Baltimore, Md., and it is only another proof of the well-earned reputation of the remedies manufactured by that house that such literary lights should be ready to assist in spreading the story of the wonderful cures wrought by St. Jacob's Oil. Another specialty now being wrought by this house—Red Star Cough Cure, which costs only twenty-five cents—is shown by analysis to be free from opiates and is of remarkable efficacy. A whole regiment of carriers is now distributing the book in large cities, while in towns and villages it can be had through druggists, and if it can not be obtained in any of these ways a copy will, on receipt of a stamp, be forwarded to any address by the publishers.—*Exchange.*

—"That young man will yet make his mark in this world. His forethought is wonderful." "What is remarkable about him?" "Why the very day he popped the question he first stopped into a lawyer's office to know what a divorce-suit would cost. He is indeed a remarkable man, and never makes a movement of any sort without stopping to consider the cost.—*Philadelphia Item.*

—In Ohio there are 761,223 horses, 24,302 mules, 536,439 milch cows; other horned cattle, 1,251,671; sheep, 5,421,165; hogs, 1,923,903.—*Cleveland Leader.*

NOT TAKING RISKS.

A Youngster Who Proposes to be on the Safe Side

"You say you live with your parents," said a china dealer who was putting a lot of youngsters through an examination for the position of errand boy in his establishment:

"Yessir."

"And you are quick at figures?"

"Yessir."

"Now, suppose I had dropped around the corner to get lunch, and a lady should come along who wished to purchase two dozen cups and saucers at a dollar and a half a dozen."

"Yessir."

"After agreeing to take the goods she hands you a five-dollar note. How much change would you return to her?"

"Two dozen cups and saucers?" asked the boy gazing toward the ceiling.

"That's what I said."

"She must be a boardin'-house keeper to——"

"Never mind what she is. How much change would you hand to her?" asked the dealer.

"A dollar and a half a dozen?"

"Yes, yes. Now then!"

"Don't you think that's pretty darn high for——"

"Never mind whether it's high or low. How much money would you return to the lady?"

"But them five dollars might be bad," ejaculated the boy, winking at the store cat.

"We will suppose the bill to be good," said the dealer, sharply.

"I don't see what one woman wants to buy all them cups and saucers for, any way. When my sister got married she didn't set up housekeepin' with near so——"

"Then you can't give me the answer?"

"What, 'bout the change?

"Yes, yes."

"Oh!"

"Come, what is the answer?"

"Well," murmured the boy, shifting to his other foot, an keeping an eye on the cat. "I'd just tell the lady to call 'round when you was in and get her change, fur the bill might be a bad un, and I don't never take no risks."

"You're engaged." ejaculated the dealer.—*California Maverick.*

CONCERNING BALDNESS.

A Delightfully Suggestive Legend for Bald People.

In the tropics, turkey-buzzards are the scavengers of towns, and are protected both by law and sentiment. A person writing from Port Clarence, in the island of Fernando Po, gives a curious legend in regard to these birds which is quite in the humor of the Spanish fancy. The streets were so clean that the wretched turkey-buzzards could scarcely find enough to supply the wants of life, and were perched about on the tops of the trees and the gables of houses, looking hungry and melancholy.

These scavengers, as no doubt the reader knows, are bald-headed, and the Spaniards have invented a little legend to account for it. They say that when the waters subsided after the deluge, and Noah opened the door of the ark to let out the passengers, the ancient mariner thought that he would give a parting word of advice to his fellow-voyagers, and beginning with the birds, he said:

"My children, when you see a man stoop down as he is coming towards you, fly away from him as quick as you can, for he is picking up a stone to throw at you."

"That's all very well!" exclaimed the turkey-buzzard; "but suppose he has already got one in his sling?"

At this, the patriarch, according to the fable, being nonplussed, became angry; and he decreed that from that time the turkey-buzzard should go bald-headed in token of its unnatural sharpness.

The legend must prove delightfully suggestive to people with bald heads.—*Youth's Companion.*

APPROPRIATE POETRY.

A Chicago Maiden's Version of Tennysonian Rhymes.

Binks, who has a tendency never to leave, when he makes a call, was down on Indiana avenue the other night, and when every other subject had been talked out, asked the young woman if she liked poetry. She said she did and that Tennyson was her favorite.

"Ah," smiled Binks, "and what is your favorite passage?"

"Why that one reading—

At eleven o'clock the young man's fancy,
Slightly turns to thoughts of home.

"Um-um" hesitated Binks, looking pale clear down below his knees, and taking out his watch, "I'll go right away and look it up; I don't remember having seen it."

"Yes" she said, "its so appropriate, you know."

Binks swears he will never return until he finds that miserable passage.—*Merchant Traveler.*

Wants an Emblem.

Uncle Abraham, over on Chatham street, was speaking to an acquaintance the other day about putting some sort of an emblem over the door of his store.

"I'd put a bee-hive," suggested the man.

"Vot does that bee-hife shtand for?"

"For industry."

"Oh, dot vhas all nonsense. Dot doan' show peoples dot I sell a fourteen dollar suit for eight dollars."

"I know, but the bee is a worker."

"Yes, but dot doan' do. Eaferybody vhas a worker Industry vhas all right, but if somebody comes back mit a pair of pants dot shrink oop eighteen inches, dot pee-hive doan' oxplain dot dis was a singular climate on pants."—*Wall Street News.*

—One day as John Van Buren was lunching at the Astor House, an enemy named Wadman came up to him. "Mr. Van Buren," said Wadman, "is there any case so unjust, mean and dirty that you will not take it?" "Well, I don't know," said Van Buren, picking up an oyster on his fork; "What have you been doing now, Wadman?"—*N. Y. Sun.*

THE ADDING MACHINE.

Contrivance of a Book-Keeper After Twelve Years' Work.

C. G. Spalding, who keeps books for Day & Johnson, has perfected a machine that is designed to aid brother book-keepers or accountants in running up long lines of figures. He has been at work on the invention since 1873, and had the thing patented something like a year ago. The machine is encased in a wooden box about eight inches square and three inches deep, and, lifting the cover, the interior is seen to hold an enameled white surface, on which are two dials, and which shows the brass keyboard in the lower left hand corner. The larger dial of the two is on the left of the machine, and is divided into one hundred sections. The rim of the smaller dial is likewise cut into twenty sections. The hand which moves the smaller is called the hundreds, about the first dial is called the unit pointer. A little finger play on the brass keyboard makes the object of the dials and the reason of the pointers' names quickly understood.

The nine keys on the board are numbered from 1 to 9 and are placed in regular order, but also in two rows, 2, 4, 6 and 8 being above and the odd numbers below. The key is a brass upright, and as the finger draws on it, a spring allows it to slip back toward the lower end of the box. The pulling of each key on the board sends the unit pointer along on its journey around the dial as many points as there are units in the number of the key. Pull the 9 key and the dial set at 0 goes to 9. Pull the same key again and the unit pointer moves to 18. Pull the 1, 2 and 3 keys now and the pointer goes consecutively with a hop, skip and jump to 24. When the unit pointer, keeping up its agile athletics has reached its starting point again, there is a quick little motion on the right hand dial. The pointer then has "dotted and gone one." The machine's internal clockwork is more accurate than a human head can hope to be. It isn't troubled with malaria, nor is it ever larger in the morning than it was the night before. All the accountant has to do is to run his eye up and down the columns, pulling each respective key as he reaches the corresponding figure. A day is sufficient in which to learn the key-board, and the motion of the hand quickly becomes almost involuntary. The expert can run the figures in his head and on the key-board simultaneously, thus "proving" his work by one trip up or down the column. Carrying is performed by setting the pointer at the number to be carried. To set the unit pointer all that is necessary is to hold down key 1 and turn the pointer forward to a number one less than the one carried. On releasing key 1 the pointer is on the desired number. The hundred pointer can be moved in either direction. The hand easily operates the nine keys thus: Nos. 1, 2 and 3 with the first finger, 4 and 5 with the second, 6 and 7 with the third, 8 and 9 with the fourth. The inventor claims for the machine unerring accuracy and surprising rapidity. He says an expert can add 240 figures a minute with it.—*Springfield (Mass.) Republican.*

THE KENTUCKIAN.

Description of the Typical Inhabitants of the Blue Grass Region.

The typical Kentuckian regards himself an American of the Americans, and thinks as little of being like the English as he would of imitating the Juies. In nothing is he more like his transatlantic ancestry than in strong self-content. He sits on his farm as though it were the pole of the heavens—a manly man with a heart in him. Usually of the blond type, robust, well formed, with clear, fair complexion, that grows ruddier with age and stomachic development, full neck, and an open, kind, untroubled countenance. He is frank, but not familiar; talkative, but not garrulous; full of the genial humor of local hits and allusions, but without a subtle nimbleness of wit; indulgent toward all purely masculine vices, but intolerant of petty crimes; no reader of books nor master in religious debate, faith coming to him as naturally as his appetite, and growing with what it is fed upon; loving roast pig, but not caring particularly for Lamb's eulogy; loving his grass like a Greek; not because it is beautiful, but because it is fresh and green; a peaceful man with strong passions, and so to be heartily loved and respected or heartily hated and respected, but never despised or trifled with. An occasional barbecue in the woods, where the saddles of South-Down mutton are roasted on spits over the coals of the mighty trench, and the steaming kettles of burgoo lend their savor to the nose of the hungry political orator, so that he becomes all the more impetuous in his invectives; the great agriculture fairs; the race-courses; the monthly county court day, when he meets his neighbors on the public square of the nearest town; the quiet Sunday mornings, when he meets them again for rather more clandestine talks at the front door of the neighborhood church—these and his own fireside are his characteristic and ample pleasures. You will never be under his roof without being deeply touched by the mellowest of all the virtues of his race—simple, unsparing human kindness and hospitality.

The women of Kentucky have long had a reputation for beauty. An average type is a refinement on the English blonde—greater delicacy of form, features, and color. A beatiful Kentucky woman is apt to be exceedingly beautiful. Her voice is almost uniformly low and soft; her hands and feet delicately formed; her skin quite pure and beautiful in tint and shading; her eyes blue or brown; to all which is added a certain unapproachable refinement. It must not be supposed, however, that there are not many genuinely ugly women here, as elsewhere.—*James Lane Allen, in Harpers Magazine.*

—Of 137 horses that have a public record of 2:20, fifty-eight are descended from Rysdyk's Hambletonian in the direct male line, with nearly as many, no doubt, who can trace their blood back to him through dams or granddams.

HARD ON DICKENS.

The Late J. B. Lippincott's Not Very Flattering Opinion of the Great English Novelist.

The late Joshua Ballinger Lippincott was full of anecdotes of the most celebrated authors of the last fifty years. Dropping into the great Market street store one day to have a talk with him about a book I was preparing, he invited me into his private office, and, being in a very chatty humor that morning, he entertained me for an hour or more with a fund of literary reminiscences.

"I have seen most of the English and American authors of my time," said Mr. Lippincott. "Dickens was naturally a genial, good-natured fellow, but his early and extraordinary success completely dazzled him, his head was turned by the 'Pickwick Papers,' and it never got entirely straight again. He was not a gentleman, as Bulwer and Thackeray were, but a born snob. No gentleman would have written 'American Notes' after enjoying the boundless hospitality that was showered upon him in this country. There are some things a gentleman can not do and that one was one of them. His novels are not so popular as they were during his life-time. A reaction in favor of Thackeray has set in. Thackeray won his way slowly to recognition and he was all the better for it. He was thirty-seven when he wrote 'Vanity Fair,' the novel which established his reputation. After that his course was right onward. Thackeray was less effusive than Dickens, but he was more genuine. He was delightful at a private dinner party, but not so ready as Dickens as a public speaker. The latter was particularly happy upon such occasions. Once, at a meeting of the Authors' Fund Society, Tom Campbell, the chairman, could not preside and Dickens was called upon at a moment's notice to take his place. He made a brilliant impromptu speech which surprised and delighted all who heard it. Thackeray enjoyed a good dinner. He was particularly fond of American oysters and canvas-back ducks. In fact, he was too much of a club man—he ate too many good dinners. His literary fame, though less splendid than Dickens' during life, will probably be more lasting. People are beginning to think that Dickens' characters were caricatures; that here is too much exaggeration in his wonderful Little Nells, his Micawbers and his Turveydrops. Few read Dickens a third time, and those who enjoyed his novels when they were young find it impossible to read them when past middle age. But in spite of his foppery and snobbery Dickens was a fine fellow and did good by drawing attention to the injustice and cruelty practiced upon the poor in public institutions, prisons, almshouses, etc. His novels still sell, but are not so popular as they were. His later works want the hearty animal life and breezy freshness that delighted all classes of readers in 'Pickwick' and 'David Copperfield.'"

Mr. Lippincott told me how he once entertained the Duke of Buckingham. "It happened in this way. When Robert Chambers visited the United States some years since I gave a dinner in his honor. The Duke of Buckingham happened to be stopping at the Continental Hotel at the time, and hearing of the affair that was to come off he signified his desire to me to be present at a genuine Philadelphia 'feed.' Of course he was invited and sat down, as he told me afterward, to the most elegant entertainment he had ever enjoyed. There were present at the dinner the Governor of Pennsylvania, the Mayor of Philadelphia, and the most distinguished men of the day to the number of one hundred. When I next visited England the Duke invited Mrs. Lippincott and myself to Stowe, where my wife remained two weeks. Stowe is one of the most magnificent seats in Great Britain, the house two hundred feet long, the grounds an earthly paradise, everything on a scale of royal splendor; in fact, I doubt whether royalty itself has a more sumptuous domain than the princely Duke of Buckingham. I highly appreciated the honor of being invited to the Duke's seat, where an English publisher's horse would as soon be invited as himself."—*Philadelphia Times.*

KNIFE HANDLES.

A Central-American Wood Used Chiefly for Pocket Cutlery.

"Did you ever wonder what knife-handles are made of?" asked a dealer in fancy woods of a reporter, as he handed out a shapeless block from his store of spoils from many trophical forests. "Outside of bone and tortoise shell and pearl, so-called, which everyone recognizes, the majority of knife-handles are made out of a close, fine-grained wood, about the name and pedigree of which 9,999 out of every 10,000 persons are ignorant. It is known in the trade as cocobola wood, and it comes in large quantities, millions of pounds a year, from Panama.

"It is of special value for knife-handles, because of its close texture; freedom from knots and flaws, and consequent disinclination to split. Many well-known kinds of wood require varnishing and polishing and filling up of crevices before they attain the beauty for which they are famous. Of course that sort of thing can't be done in the case of knife-handles, and something must be used which doesn't require fixing up. Cocobola is rarely used for cabinet-making, because, being a gummy wood, it doesn't glue well. The same qualities that make it of use in the manufacture of knife-handles render it valuable for the making of wind instruments, like the flute. It comes to us in chunks, not in strips and planks, like other woods. Sometimes these pieces will weigh five and six hundred pounds, but generally much less than that. It costs 2 1-2 cents a pound now, but before freights went down and the isthmus was opened up so thoroughly it used to cost double that price.—*N. Y. Tribune.*

—California has ninety-seven banks in operation, whose resources are $152,000,000. Twenty-seven of them are savings banks.